

HB 263 -- SCHOOL DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY

SPONSOR: Sommer

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 8 to 1. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill requires every school district and charter school to maintain an accountability portal for the public. By September 1, 2018 each public school district and charter school must develop, maintain, and make available all publicly available budget, income, expenditure, and disbursement information for the current fiscal year. The data on the portal must be updated quarterly and remain available for at least 10 years.

Additionally, the bill requires, by January 1, 2018, that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) create a template for voluntary use by any school district needing assistance in developing an accountability portal. In the event that a school district or charter school does not maintain a website, the information must be maintained through DESE.

This bill is the same as HB 1427 (2016).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this bill provides a financial accountability hub for school districts to provide information to taxpayers regarding certain district information. If a district does not currently have a website or the means to put together one then DESE will assist the district with providing taxpayers access to the information.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Sommer.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.